

REMARKS

Claims 1-38 are cancelled. New claims 39-45 are directed to a novel display of points that indicate sociometric social classification. New claims 46-53 are directed to a method of sociometric analysis that calculates probability and strength scores for each of a plurality of sociometric social classifications.

Sherman discloses a manual method of performing one limited type of sociometric analysis. Sherman teaches plotting the sociometric data in a "Bull's Eye Target" type of graph, as depicted in Figure 4 (p. 12). In this graph, each "ring" of the bull's eye represents a different sociometric social classification. Individuals are mapped into the graph based solely on their predetermined sociometric social classification.

In stark contrast, claims 39-45 recite displaying the results of sociometric analysis as a scatterplot of points, each representing a schoolchild, wherein the points are plotted along Cartesian coordinate axes representing sociometric metrics such as Liked Most and Liked Least scores. Two-dimensional areas of the display containing points representing individual schoolchildren are then marked as sociometric social classifications, and the individuals corresponding to the points within each area are classified accordingly. This novel graphic display presents at least the significant advantage over the prior art that the degree of each individual's classification is visually apparent, as described in Applicant's specification at p. 12, line 25 – p. 13, line 13.

Sherman additionally discloses calculating z-scores for Liked Most, Liked Least, Social Preference, and Social Impact metrics, and classifying individuals into a variety of sociometric social classifications based on these values. Sherman does not teach nor suggest calculating and reporting probability or strength scores associated with each classification, as recited in claims 46-53. The probability and strength scores are important statistical values that represent the probability that an individual would be classified the same way upon re-assessment, and how fixed or fluid the classification is over time, respectively.

Applicant notes that this definition of probability score is distinct from the Examiner's official notice that it is known to calculate a "concordance, correspondence, accuracy, strength/weakness, etc." of a measure "wherein such scores provide an indication of the [sic] how 'close' (well) the score is to the 'ideal' (typically, expected) value(s) for that category." The probability scores of claims 46-53 do not purport to represent how closely each sociometric classification is to any "ideal" value. Quite the opposite, the probability scores are indicative of how a specific individual's classification may vary upon a large number of re-assessments, as described at p. 14, lines 5-11:

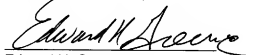
Probability scores are calculated based on the following premise: if a sufficiently large number of sociometric analyses were performed according to the present invention, then the plotting of "z-scores" of each of the questions administered (*i.e.*, standardized Liked Most, standardized Liked Least, etc.) for a given individual would take the form of a series of normal distributions, where the mean of each distribution would be the individual's current score on that question, and the mean of the standard deviations equivalent to the standard deviation of the current distribution.

The claimed probability scores are thus a measure of each individual's variance through many re-assessments – a significantly different concept than any function of which the Examiner has taken official notice.

All pending claims define patentably over the art of record. Accordingly, prompt allowance of all pending claims is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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